even in small quantities, it leaves behind a powerful sense of heat and acrimony in the fauces. Its most active chemical constituent appears to be a resin, which separates in the form of a white precipitate, when water is added to the alcoholic solution. The decoction suffers little or no change with alcohol, gelatin or salts of iron. Muriate of tin affects it slightly, the nitrate of mercury more abundantly. Its taste is much weaker than that of the tincture. Water distilled from the root has a highly nauseous taste and odour.

The root of the Iris versicolor given medicinally is an active cathartic. Mr. William Bartram, in his travels in Georgia and Florida, informs us, that on his arrival at Ottasse, an Indian town on the Tallapoose, he found the natives "fasting, taking medicine, and praying, to avert a grevious calamity of sickness which had lately afflicted them, and laid in the grave abundance of their citizens. The first seven or eight days, during which time they eat or drink nothing, but a meagre gruel made of a little corn-flour and water; taking at the same time, by way of medicine or physic, a strong decoction of the roots of the *Iris versicolor*, which is a powerful cathartic. They hold this root in high estimation, and every town cultivates a little plantation of it, having a large artificial

pond just without the town, planted and almost overgrown with it."

Having myself formerly made use of this root in dispensary practice, I can bear testimony to its efficacy as a medicine, though not altogether to its convenience. A small quantity of the recent root, or a few grains of the root newly dried, are generally certain and active in their operation on the bowels. They are however apt to occasion a distressing nausea like sea sickness, with a prostration of strength of some hours' continuance; so that I think the plant will not be like to come into favor as a cathartic, at least when better ones are at hand. The activity of this article is diminished by age.

The stimulating properties of the Iris render it capable of exciting many of the secretions, as well as excretions. But I know of no purpose for which it seems better calculated, than that of a diuretic. The late Dr. Macbride of Carolina assured me, that he had found great benefit in dropsical affections from a decoction of the roots of this plant in combination with those of Eryngium yuccifolium. In consequence of his recommendation, I administered the tincture of the Iris in small doses to several persons affected with anasarca and with hydrothorax. It was evidently of

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